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Message Text

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ACTION NODS-00

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /001 W
----------070530Z 065557 /12
O 070456Z MAY 77
FM AMEMBASSY TOKYO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 7524

S E C R E T TOKYO 6660

NODIS

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: OTRA, KS, JA, US
SUBJECT: CONSULTATIONS WITH GOJ ON KOREAN TROOP WITHDRAWAL

REF: A. STATE 104290; B. TOKYO 3634

1. I CONVEYED SUBSTANCE OF REF A TO DEPUTY FOREIGN MINISTER ARITA AND AMERICAN AFFAIRS DIRGEN YAMAZAKI IN MEETING ON MAY 7. I STRESSED HIGHLY CONFIDENTIAL NATURE THIS INFORMATION AND REQUESTED SOONEST CONFIRMATION OF DATES PROPOSED FOR VISIT JCS CHAIRMAN BROWN AND UNDER SECRETARY HABIB TO TOKYO (MAY 27 AND, IF NECESSARY, MAY 28). AT CONCLUSION MY PRESENTATION, I AGAIN EMPHASIZED NECESSITY THAT THIS MATTER BE HELD IN STRICT CONFIDENCE UNTIL PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENT MADE IN WASHINGTON. ARITA AND YAMAZAKI STATED THAT THEY UNDERSTOOD COMPLETELY. THEY FELT, HOWEVER, THAT THEY SHOULD ALERT PRIME MINISTER FUKUDA IN LONDON IN EVENT THIS SUBJECT SHOULD COME UP DURING HIS BILATERAL WITH PRESIDENT CARTER. I DID NOT POSE ANY OBJECTION TO THIS.

2. ALTHOUGH PROPOSED TIMING IS SOMEWHAT INCONVENIENT SINCE IT WILL COINCIDE WITH FINAL DAYS OF DIET SESSION DURING WHICH THERE WILL BE INTENSIVE MANEUVERINGS ON POSSIBLE EXTENSION, ARITA WELCOMED THIS OPPORTUNITY TO INITIATE PROCESS OF CONSULTATIONS AND WAS REASONABLY CONFIDENT THAT DATES WOULD BE ACCEPTABLE. HE STATED, HOWEVER, THAT IT PROBABLY WOULD NOT BE POSSIBLE TO
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PROVIDE FINAL CONFIRMATION UNTIL AFTER PM FUKUDA RETURNS TO JAPAN (APPROXIMATELY MIDNIGHT MAY 9 WASHINGTON TIME) AND PROMISED TO TRY TO GIVE ME FINAL ANSWER BY MORNING MAY 11, TOKYO TIME (LATE EVENING MAY 10, WASHINGTON TIME).

3. IN INFORMAL DISCUSSION WHICH FOLLOWED, ARITA AND YAMAZAKI NOTED THAT PM FUKUDA HAS TAKEN POSITION THAT GROUND FORCE WITH-

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DRAWAL IS BASICALLY QUESTION BETWEEN USG AND ROKG, ALTHOUGH GOJ QTE VERY MUCH CONCERNED WITH MODALITIES AND TIMING UNQTE. THEY HOPED, THEREFORE, THAT BROWN AND HABIB WOULD BE PREPARED TO BRIEF GOJ IN DETAIL ON RESULTS OF CONSULTATIONS WITH ROK AND INITIAL REACTIONS OF ROKG TO U.S. THINKING.

4. IN ADDITION, ARITA STRESSED THAT AS BACKGROUND FOR US-GOJ CONSULTATIONS HE FELT IT MOST IMPORTANT THAT U.S. EXPLAIN AS FULLY AS POSSIBLE THE QTE PHILOSOPHY OR RATIONALE UNQTE FOR BASIC DECISION TO WITHDRAW GROUND FORCES FROM KOREA AND PARTICULARLY WHAT SIGNIFICANCE OR IMPLICATIONS U.S. SEES IN THIS ACTION FOR ITS REGIONAL OR STRATEGIC POLICY THINKING. I CALLED ARITA'S ATTENTION TO OUR INTENTION TO CONVEY PRESIDENT CARTER'S THINKING ON GROUND FORCE WITHDRAWAL QTE WITHIN THE CONTEXT OF THE DECISION TO WITHDRAW THESE FORCES UNQTE. ARITA SAID THAT HE UNDERSTOOD THAT INTENTION BUT FELT THAT UNLESS GOJ IS ABLE TO OBTAIN A MORE COMPLETE UNDERSTANDING THAN IT HAS TO DATE OF REASONING BEHIND BASIC DECISION TO WITHDRAW, IT IS DIFFICULT TO DEAL WITH UNEASY SPECULATION AS TO US MOTIVES AND INTENTIONS WHICH HAS MARKED DEBATE THUS FAR WITHIN AND OUTSIDE JAPANESE GOVERNMENT. HE ADDED THAT ANY AUTHORITATIVE MATERIAL BEARING ON THIS POINT WHICH COULD BE MADE AVAILABLE TO GOJ PRIOR TO BROWN/HABIB VISIT WOULD ASSIST GOJ IN PREPARING FOR CONSULTATIONS. I SAID THAT I WOULD CONVEY HIS VIEWS BUT OFFERED NO ENCOURAGEMENT THAT ANYTHING COULD BE MADE AVAILABLE IN ADVANCE, SUGGESTING RATHER THAT BROWN AND HABIB MIGHT FIND IT MORE USEFUL TO SET SUCH BACKGROUND AT START OF DISCUSSIONS IN TOKYO.

5. YAMAZAKI REFERRED TO STUDY PAPER ON GROUND FORCE WITHDRAWAL
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WHICH HAD BEEN BRIEFED INFORMALLY TO EMBASSY ON MARCH 14 (REF B) AND NOTED THAT THUS FAR THERE HAD BEEN NO REACTION FROM WASHINGTON. HE STATED THAT THAT STUDY HAD SPECULATED ON POSSIBLE U.S. MOTIVATIONS AND INTENTIONS AND HAD RAISED A NUMBER OF QUESTIONS CONCERNING MODALITIES WHICH HE HOPED COULD BE ADDRESSED BY BROWN AND HABIB DURING CONSULTATIONS IN TOKYO.

6. ARITA AND YAMAZAKI DID NOT OFFER ANY COMMENTS IN RESPECT TO CONSIDERATIONS RAISED IN REF A, PARA 4. ARITA DID COMMENT THAT HE ASSUMED PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENT TO BE MADE IN WASHINGTON NEXT WEEK WOULD BE VERY BRIEF AND NOT REFER TO PARTICULAR OFFICIALS WITH WHOM BROWN AND HABIB WOULD MEET IN SEOUL OR TOKYO. HE NOTED THAT AS FAR AS GOJ IS CONCERNED, A FINAL DECISION AS TO WHO WOULD MEET WITH BROWN AND HABIB PROBABLY COULD NOT BE MADE UNTIL JUST BEFORE THEIR ARRIVAL (PRESUMABLY BECAUSE OF UNCERTAINITY AS TO STATE OF PLAY IN DIET AT THAT TIME).
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